

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method for exchanging documents in transactions between partners that are joined in an exchange network, the partners communicating with each other via a hub entity, the method  
5 comprising:

setting up an agreement associated with each document type for each partner that joins the exchange network;

placing in a file receive location a document from a first partner, the file receive location being password protected such that only a partner that provides a correct identity with any document it sends may place that document at the file receive location; and

performing steps, by the hub entity, including,

retrieving the document from the file receive location,

validating the document against its respective agreement,

mapping the document into a standard document the format of which being partner system platform neutral,

20 assigning a key to the document for future references,

[illegible][illegible]